

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A service retrieval apparatus which provides a retrieval service for retrieving a service provided by a server connected to a network in response to a request from a client and returning a result of the retrieval, comprising:

a retrieval means which unit that sets a retrieval conditions condition  
according to the request from ~~said the~~ client and performs a first retrieval over the network for  
a service retrieves a service based upon the set retrieval ~~conditions~~ condition; and

a retrieval result judgment means which unit that judges whether or not a  
result of the first retrieval ~~by said retrieval means~~ satisfies judgment criteria set in  
~~advance,~~ advance; and

~~wherein, when it is judged by said retrieval result judgment means that the~~  
~~retrieval result does not satisfy the judgment criteria, said retrieval means changes the~~  
~~retrieval conditions and performs retrieval again.~~

a retrieval result output unit that outputs the result which is judged to satisfy the  
judgment criteria;

wherein when it is judged that the result of the first retrieval does not satisfy the  
judgment criteria, the retrieval unit changes the retrieval condition and performs a second  
retrieval over the network.

2. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein, when it is judged ~~by said retrieval result judgment means that the a~~  
number of one or more services included in the retrieval result has not reached ~~the a~~ lower  
limit number ~~of services~~ set as the judgment criteria, ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means~~ unit changes the

retrieval ~~conditions~~ condition so as to be wider and performs the second retrieval ~~retrieval~~ again.

3. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 2, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means unit~~ performs the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excluding ~~the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~has already been is~~ performed.

4. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when it is judged ~~by said retrieval result judgment means~~ that ~~the a~~ number of one or more services included in the result of the first retrieval exceeds an ~~retrieval result has exceeded the~~ upper limit number of services set as the judgment criteria, ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means unit~~ changes the retrieval ~~conditions condition~~ ~~so as to~~ be narrower ~~and performs to perform the second retrieval~~ ~~retrieval again~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 4, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means unit~~ performs the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excluding ~~the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~is performed~~ ~~retrieval has already been performed~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 4, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means unit~~ ~~performs narrowing narrows down~~ ~~retrieval of the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~is performed for performing the second~~ ~~retrieval~~ ~~retrieval has already been performed~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a reply unit that ~~means which~~ rearranges the result of the retrieval ~~by the~~ ~~retrieval means~~ based upon values with respect to attribute items included in the retrieval ~~conditions, condition,~~ and then returns the ~~retrieval result~~ of the retrieval to said client.

8. (Currently Amended) A plurality of service retrieval apparatuses which provide a retrieval service for retrieving a service provided by a server connected to a network in response to a request from a client and returning a result of the retrieval, the system comprising:

a service information database ~~which~~ that stores service information including address information and installation position information of ~~said the~~ server and attribute information of a service provided by ~~said the~~ server;

a service retrieval apparatus database ~~which, that,~~ when ~~said the~~ network is divided into a plurality of sub-networks, stores address information and installation position information of a service retrieval apparatus with each sub-network included in a retrieval range;

a retrieval range setting ~~means which unit that,~~ by retrieving ~~said the~~ service retrieval apparatus database based upon inputted retrieval conditions, ~~specify~~ specifies one or more service retrieval apparatuses conforming to the retrieval conditions and ~~set~~ sets sub-networks, which correspond to ~~said the~~ specified service retrieval apparatuses, as a retrieval range for the request;

~~retrieval means which causes said retrieval range setting means to set a range for retrieval in response to a request from said client and requests its own service retrieval apparatus or other service retrieval apparatuses included in the set retrieval range to perform retrieval to thereby execute service retrieval; and~~

~~retrieval result judgment means which judges whether or not a result of the retrieval by said retrieval means satisfies judgment criteria set in advance;~~

~~wherein, when it is judged by said retrieval result judgment means that the retrieval result does not satisfy the judgment criteria, said retrieval means changes the retrieval range corresponding to the request from said client and performs retrieval again.~~

a retrieval unit that executes a first retrieval over the network for a service according to the set retrieval range for the request;

a retrieval result judgment unit that judges whether or not a result of the first retrieval satisfies judgment criteria set in advance; and

a retrieval result output unit that outputs the result which is judged to satisfy the judgment criteria;

wherein, when it is judged that the result of the retrieval does not satisfy the judgment criteria, the retrieval unit changes the retrieval conditions and performs a second retrieval over the network.

9. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 8, wherein, when it is judged by ~~said retrieval result judgment means~~ that the a number of one or more services included in the ~~retrieval result of the retrieval~~ has does not reached the reach a lower limit number of ~~services~~ set as the judgment criteria, ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means~~unit changes the retrieval conditions ~~according to the request from said client so as to be wider and performs to perform the second retrieval.~~ retrieval again.

10. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 9, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means~~unit performs the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excluding ~~the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~has already been is~~ performed.

11. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 8, wherein, when it is judged by ~~said retrieval result judgment means~~ that the a number of one or more services included in the ~~retrieval result~~ has exceeded the result of the first retrieval exceeds an upper limit number of ~~services~~ set as the judgment criteria, ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means~~unit changes the retrieval conditions ~~corresponding to the request from said client so as to be narrower and performs to perform the second retrieval.~~ retrieval again.

12. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 11, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means-unit~~ performs the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excluding ~~the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~has already been is~~ performed.

13. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 12, wherein ~~said the~~ retrieval ~~means-unit~~ ~~performs narrowing narrows~~ down ~~retrieval of the a~~ range for which the first retrieval ~~has already been is~~ performed to perform the second retrieval.

14. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval apparatuses according to claim 8, further comprising a reply ~~means which-unit that~~ rearranges the result of the retrieval ~~by said retrieval means~~ based upon values with respect to attribute items included in the retrieval conditions, and then returns the ~~retrieval~~ result of the retrieval to said client.

15. (Currently Amended) A client apparatus which retrieves a service over a network provided by a server connected to ~~a the~~ network in response to a service retrieval request and sends the service retrieval request to a service retrieval apparatus providing a retrieval service for returning a result of the retrieval, comprising:

retrieval result receiving means ~~which receives~~ for receiving a retrieval result sent from said service retrieval apparatus in response to the service retrieval request;

selection means ~~which selects~~ for selecting one or more attribute ~~item~~ items, magnitudes of which can be compared, from attribute items included in retrieval conditions of the service; and

output means ~~which rearranges~~ for rearranging a plurality of items of service information included in the retrieval result based upon values of the attribute items selected by said selection means included in each item of service information to output the service information.

16. (Currently Amended) A service retrieval method which retrieves a service provided by a server connected to a network in response to a request from a client and returns a result of the retrieval, comprising:

~~a retrieval step of setting a retrieval conditions condition~~ in response to a request of the ~~client~~ client;

~~\_\_\_\_\_ and retrieves a service based upon performing a first retrieval over the network for a service based upon the set retrieval conditions;~~ condition;

~~a retrieval result judgment step of judging whether or not a result of the first retrieval by said retrieval step satisfies judgment criteria set in advance; and~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ a reply step of returning the result of the retrieval which is judged to satisfy the judgment criteria by said retrieval means to said the client;~~ client; and

~~wherein, when it is judged by said retrieval result judgment step that the retrieval result of the retrieval does not satisfy the judgment criteria, said retrieval step changes changing the retrieval condition conditions and performs to perform a second retrieval over the network.~~ retrieval again.

17. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval method according to claim 16, further comprising:

~~wherein, when it is judged by said retrieval result judgment step that the a~~ number of one or more services included in the ~~retrieval result of the retrieval~~ has does not ~~reached the reach a lower limit number of services set as the judgment criteria, said retrieval step changes changing the retrieval conditions so as a condition to be wider and performs to perform the second retrieval.~~ retrieval again.

18. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval method according to claim 17,

wherein ~~said retrieval means performs retrieval~~ the second retrieval is performed with respect to a new retrieval range excluding ~~the a~~ range for which the first retrieval has already been is performed.

19. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval method according to claim 16 further comprising:

~~wherein, when it is judged by said retrieval result judgment step that the a~~  
number of one or more services included in the ~~retrieval result has exceeded the~~ result of the  
first retrieval exceeds an upper limit number of ~~services~~ set as the judgment criteria, ~~said~~  
~~retrieval step changes changing~~ the retrieval ~~conditions so as~~ condition to be narrower and  
~~performs retrieval again to perform the second retrieval.~~

20. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval method according to claim 19,  
wherein a range for which the first retrieval is performed is narrowed down to  
perform the second retrieval. ~~said retrieval step performs narrowing down retrieval of the~~  
~~range for which retrieval has already been performed.~~

21. (Currently Amended) The service retrieval method according to claim 16,  
further comprising ~~a reply step of rearranging the result of the retrieval by said retrieval step~~  
~~based upon values~~ with respect to attribute items included in the retrieval  
~~conditions~~ condition, and ~~then returns returning~~ the rearranged retrieval result of the retrieval  
to ~~said the~~ client.